



California Department of Veterans Affairs

NEWS FOR VETERANS

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NEWS FROM THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

VETERANS MEMORIAL PLAZA GROUNDBREAKING SET FOR AUGUST 30

(Sacramento, Calif.) - The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Northern California Health Care System is pleased to announce a groundbreaking ceremony for the Veterans Memorial Plaza at the Sacramento VA Medical Center at 2 p.m. on Tuesday, August 30.

California Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Thomas Johnson will give the keynote address at the ceremony, which will be attended by local elected officials, veterans service organizations and community members. The ceremony is open to the public.

The memorial plaza will offer Sacramento area residents and visitors a tranquil place to remember and honor veterans for their service and sacrifice to our nation. The theme of the plaza, "Coming Home," will be reflected by its centerpiece, a 15-foot bronze statue of a returning medic being reunited with his young daughter. The plaza will be paved with approximately 1,500 bricks, inscribed with the names of veterans who have served as members of the armed forces, active duty personnel, family members, businesses, organizations and donors.

The plaza will be located in front of the main entrance to the new Sacramento VA Medical Center, which was dedicated in October 2003. "We are honored to have such a beautiful memorial being built on the VA campus here in Sacramento," said Lawrence Sandler, Director, VA Northern California Health Care System. "We are humbled by the extraordinary vision, commitment and gracious contributions of the Veterans Memorial Plaza Board of Directors who were responsible for fundraising, coordinating and overseeing development of the plaza."

"We are extremely grateful to all the individuals and organizations whose generous donations have contributed to the success of the project," said Paul Ayres, Chairman, Veterans Memorial Plaza Project Board of Directors. "We are excited this day has arrived and we are looking forward to completion of the plaza, which will be dedicated at a formal ceremony on December 7."

The Veterans Memorial Plaza Project Board of Directors will take orders for inscribed memorial bricks through September 9, 2005. Bricks may be ordered for a donation of fifty dollars by calling (916) 638-8720 or visiting www.veteransmemorialplaza.org.

The Sacramento VA Medical Center is located at 10535 Hospital Way, Mather, Ca. For more information contact Karen Pridmore, public affairs officer, VA Northern California Health Care System at (925) 372-

NEWS FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

LABOR DEPARTMENT STREAMLINES PROCESS FOR NATIONAL GUARD & RESERVE SERVICE MEMBERS TO FILE EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS COMPLAINTS

WASHINGTON—On August 3, 2005, U.S. Labor Secretary Elaine L. Chao announced a new service to help ensure National Guard and reserve service members return to the jobs and benefits they are entitled to under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). The latest improvement by the Department of Labor is a Web site where a USERRA or veterans' preference complaint can be filed electronically at <https://vets1010.dol.gov/Login.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2fDefault.aspx>.

America's soldiers, who sacrifice so much for all of us, deserve every consideration and legal protection in returning to civilian life and careers, Chao said. This new online form will make it easier for National Guard and Reserve service members to alert us to any job-related problems they may encounter because of their service to our country.

Developed by the Labor Department's Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS), the form is called the VETS Form 1010. It is easy to fill out and can be filed in seconds electronically.

This is the latest in a series of compliance-assistance efforts undertaken by the Department of Labor to increase employee and employer awareness of USERRA. Others include:

- Providing a poster that spells out rights and responsibilities under USERRA for display in workplaces. It can be downloaded at: <http://www.dol.gov/vets/programs/userra/poster.pdf>;
- Providing briefings and technical assistance to more than 280,000 service members and others on USERRA;
- Distributing public service announcements to increase awareness of USERRA rights, and
- Publishing proposed USERRA regulations, which explain the law in plain English and are expected to be officially released in the fall.

USERRA protects the job rights of individuals who voluntarily or involuntarily leave employment positions to undertake military service. The law also prohibits employers from discriminating against past and present members of the uniformed services and applicants to the uniformed services.

Employers can obtain detailed information about USERRA by calling 1-866-4-USA-DOL or by visiting <http://www.dol.gov/vets/programs/userra/>.

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